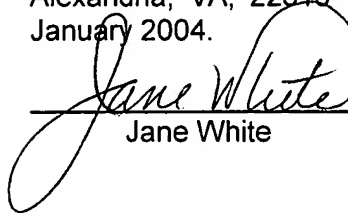


Bucket

By

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Jane White

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to containers and, more specifically, it relates to a bucket system for allowing unobstructed insertion of an object into the bucket while providing a balanced bucket.

5

Background Of The Invention

Containers such as buckets are known and used. A conventional container is comprised of a cylindrical structure with an interior cavity, a floor and a pivotally attached handle. A removable lid may be attached about the upper opening of the container during non-use. The handle is pivotally attached to the outer side portions of
10 the container and is above a center portion of the container when the user is grasping the handle.

A problem with conventional containers is that the position of the handle makes it extremely difficult to insert an object into the container for accessing and/or removing the contents. For example, the handle obstructs a paintbrush that is in the container to
15 retrieve paint. In addition, when using a conventional paint container, the user's hands typically become covered with paint from the paintbrush during entry and exiting of the container.

The invention allows unobstructed insertion of an object such as a cloth, dipper or paintbrush into the container while an individual comfortably supports the bucket.
20 Conventional container devices do not allow for easy insertion and exiting of such objects from the container, while also providing a container that is balanced when supported by the handle.

In these respects, the bucket or container according to the present invention substantially departs from the conventional concepts and designs of the prior art, and in so doing provides an apparatus primarily developed for the purpose of allowing unobstructed insertion of a paintbrush while an individual comfortably supports the
5 bucket.

Summary Of The Invention

In view of the foregoing disadvantages inherent in the known types of containers
10 now present in the prior art, the present invention provides a new bucket system construction wherein the same can be utilized for allowing unobstructed insertion of an object, and is balanced so that the user may comfortably support the bucket.

The present invention generally comprises a body having an upper opening and an interior cavity, a floor having a rear portion and a front portion within the body, and a
15 handle attached to a front edge of the body. The handle has a gripping member and a pair of side portions that define a receiver opening for comfortably receiving the hand of a user. The body is eccentrically weighted so that the bucket is balanced when suspended by the handle.

In this respect, before explaining at least one embodiment of the invention in
20 detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and to the arrangements of the components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced and carried out in various ways. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology employed herein are for the purpose
25 of the description and should not be regarded as limiting.

A primary object of the present invention is to provide a bucket that will overcome the shortcomings of the prior art devices.

A second object is to provide a bucket for allowing unobstructed insertion and removal of an object while an individual comfortably supports the bucket.

Another object is to provide a bucket that reduces the likelihood of material in the bucket being inadvertently applied to the user's hand.

5 A further object is to provide a bucket that remains balanced during usage.

An additional object is to provide a bucket that increases the efficiency of use.

A further object is to provide a bucket that is comfortable for a user to support.

10 Another object is to provide a bucket that requires only one hand of a user to support.

An additional object is to provide a bucket that is easy to clean.

15 Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become obvious to the reader, and it is intended that these objects and advantages are within the scope of the present invention.

20 To the accomplishment of the above related objects, this invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that changes may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of the appended claims.

Brief Description of the Drawings

25 Various other objects, features and attendant advantages of the present invention will become fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference

characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a front upper perspective view of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a rear upper perspective view of the present invention.

5 **FIG. 3** is a top view of the present invention.

FIG. 4 is a rear view of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a side view of the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a cross sectional view taken along line 6-6 of **FIG. 3**.

FIG. 7 is a side elevation of an additional embodiment of the present invention.

10 **FIG. 8** is a side elevation of the embodiment of **FIG. 7**, with the bucket rotated ninety degrees from **FIG. 7**.

Description Of The Preferred Embodiment

Turning now descriptively to the drawings, in which similar reference characters
15 denote similar elements throughout the several views, **FIG. 1** through **FIG. 8** illustrate a paint bucket system which comprises a body **20** having an upper opening **26** and an interior cavity, a floor **30** having a rear portion **32** and a front portion **34** within the body **20**, and a handle **40** attached to a front edge **28** of the body **20**. The handle **40** has a gripping member **44** and a pair of side portions **46** that define a receiver opening **42** for
20 comfortably receiving the hand of a user. The rear portion **32** of the floor **30** is thicker than, or is elevated from, the front portion **34**, for distributing an increased percentage of the volume of paint within the body **20** toward the front portion **34** thereof to assist in counterbalancing the position of the handle **40**.

25 As shown in **Figures 1, 2, 4, 5 7, and 8** of the drawings, the body **20** is a cylindrical structure having an outer surface **22** and an inner surface **24**. The body **20** may have various shapes and sizes as can be appreciated. The body **20** may be comprised of one or more walls having various cross sectional shapes. The inner

surface **24** of the body **20** and the floor **30** define a reservoir for retaining the paint. The body **20** may also be tapered as shown in **Figures 1, 2 and 4** of the drawings. The body **20** is preferably constructed of a plastic material, however, various other types of materials may be utilized to construct the body **20**.

5 As shown in **Figures 1 and 2** of the drawings, the body **20** includes an upper opening **26** for receiving the paint and a paintbrush **12**. The upper opening **26** is preferably broad enough for allowing a paintbrush **12** to be easily inserted within. The upper opening **26** has a front edge **28** and a rear edge **29** as best shown in **Figures 3, 5 and 6** of the drawings.

10 As best shown in **Figure 6** and in **Figure 7** of the drawings, the portion of the body **20** adjacent the front edge **28** and the handle **40** preferably has a thicker wall portion than the portion of the body **20** opposite thereof, or an added weight. Weight member **50** may be positioned within the body **20** adjacent the front edge **28** for
15 increasing the weight further on the front side of the handle **40**. As shown, the weight **50** is positioned below handle **40** and on the same side of the body as the handle. The thicker portion of the body **20** and/or the added weight increases the weight on the front side of the handle **40**, thereby counterbalancing the increased weight of the body **20** and the paint within the rear side of the handle **40**. The weight member **50** may be
20 comprised of any well-known material such as but not limited to lead. The weight member **50** may also be attached to the outer surface **22** of the body **20** by utilizing conventional attachment means.

25 Opposite of the upper opening **26** a floor **30** encloses the lower portion of the body **20** thereby defining the reservoir as best shown in **Figures 3 and 6** of the drawings. The floor **30** may be comprised of various shapes and designs. The floor **30** has a front portion **34** that is below the front edge **28** and a rear portion **32** that is below the rear edge **29** of the body **20**. The floor **30** is preferably angled downwardly from the rear portion **32** toward the front portion **34** thereby decreasing the volume of paint positioned to the rear of the handle **40** within the body **20** as best shown in **Figure 6** of

the drawings. A base **21** may be attached to the body **20** opposite of the upper opening **26** as shown in **Figures 1** through **6** of the drawings.

As shown in **Figures 1** through **6** of the drawings, the handle **40** is attached to the front edge **28** of the body **20**. The handle **40** may have various shapes such as straight or curved'. The handle **40** is comprised of a pair of side portions **46** that extend upwardly to support a gripping member **44** with a receiver opening **42** within as best shown in **Figures 2, 3** and **4** of the drawings. The handle **40** is preferably ergonomic and may include finger grooves. The handle **40** may also include an aperture **48** extending through the gripping member **44** for receiving a hook or other extended member.

As best shown in **Figure 3** of the drawings, the gripping member **44** is positioned closer to the front edge **28** of the body **20** than the rear edge **29** of the body **20** to avoid obstructing the upper opening **26** within the body **20**. The position of the gripping member **44** also positions the pivot axis of the body **20** forwardly thereby requiring additional weight within the front portion **34** to maintain the body **20** within a substantially vertical position. As further shown in **Figure 3** of the drawings, the paintbrush **12** may be partially inserted into the receiver opening **42** of the handle **40** thereby supporting the bristles of the paintbrush **12** within the paint thereby engaging the floor **30**.

In use, the user inserts paint or other liquid into the body **20** through the upper opening **26**. Because the floor **30** is inclined downwardly from the rear portion **32** to the front portion **34**, the depth of the paint above the front portion **34** is greater than the depth of the paint above the rear portion **32**, thereby effectively increasing the volume and weight of the paint on the front of the gripping member **44** thereby counterbalancing the position of the gripping member **44**. In addition, the wall of the body **20** is preferably thicker below the front edge **28**, thereby increasing the weight to counterbalance the position of the gripping member **44**. Also, a weight member **50** that acts as a counterweight may be positioned on or within the body **20** below the front edge **28** for

increasing the weight in front of the gripping member **44**. The user grasps the gripping member **44** with their hand and the body **20** maintains a substantially vertical position because of the increased weight to the front of the gripping member **44**. When the paintbrush **12** is not in use, the user positions a portion of the paintbrush **12** within the receiver opening **42** for supporting the bristles within the paint to maintain the bristles in a moist condition.

As to a further discussion of the manner of usage and operation of the present invention, the same should be apparent from the above description. Accordingly, no further discussion relating to the manner of usage and operation will be provided. The bucket or container is ideally suited as a paint container, but can be used for other purposes, such as containing cleaning materials, wherein a sponge or similar device may be easily inserted or withdrawn, or the bucket could contain ice or beverages that are removed with tongs or a dipper.

With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed to be within the expertise of those skilled in the art, and all equivalent structural variations and relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.